



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 12, 2002

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State Board Adopts Substantive Policies for Early Childhood Literacy, Elevating Educational Leadership

State Board of Education members unanimously approved today policy recommendations for two of its task forces which will improve the way schools handle early childhood literacy and encourage and nurture school administrators.

The Board's Ensuring Early Childhood Literacy task force, chaired by Board Member Sharon A. Wise, created four overarching policies adopted by the Board in regard to early childhood literacy efforts and resources. Those policies include:

- Promoting public awareness to inform citizens to become dedicated to early literacy.
- Promoting early literacy and fostering collaborative partnerships that optimize the growth and development of Michigan's children.
- Ensuring that Michigan's children will receive seamless, high-quality early literacy experiences.
- Providing high-quality early literacy opportunities for Michigan children that are taught by knowledgeable and capable individuals.

The task force also directed the Michigan Department of Education to undertake several initiatives to support these overarching goals, including encouraging Intermediate School Districts (ISDs) to promote community awareness of early learning programs, and building partnerships with local libraries, hospitals, and medical organizations to provide free early learning materials to families with young children.

The Board also directed the Department of Education to draft recommendations to the Legislature to restore and increase funding for state-sponsored literacy programs, including the Michigan School Readiness Program (MSRP), and the All Students Achieve Program - Parent Involvement and Education (ASAP-PIE). A second recommendation would focus on restoring funding to support Regional Literacy Training Center efforts to increase the number of teachers and administrators receive professional development in early literacy development and acquisition.

A third and final recommendation would also be worded to encourage the Legislature to fund full-day, full-year, high quality early education programs for at-risk young children.

Board members also unanimously approved policies from its Elevating Educational Leadership task force, chaired by Board Member and NASBE Delegate Marianne Yared McGuire. Those policies include:

- Creating an advisory panel of seven to nine members to monitor and review proposed changes in educational policy and their potential implications for school administrators.
- Working with the advisory panel to develop a new system of endorsement for school administrators, with special emphasis on school building principals, establishing standards for educational leadership that incorporate core competencies.
- Supporting high quality professional development through the establishment of an effective, state-wide mentoring program for new principals, and securing an appropriate level of funding for it through the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation.

Full copies of both task force reports are available on the Department's website, www.michigan.gov/mde.

In other business, Board members extensively discussed progress toward complying with NCLB, implementing Education YES!, the state's new school accreditation program, and potentially adopting a revised definition of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). No decisions were made on the items.

The Board will further discuss the items at its October 17 meeting in Lansing.